

Agenda Item	11.
Report No	CLH 79/19

## THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Care, Learning and Housing

**Date:** 5 December 2019

**Report Title:** Supporting Educational Transformation

**Report By:** Chief Executive

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to give Members an update regarding the progress to date for the Educational Change Team. The Education Change team is a group of senior leaders seconded until April 2020 within an agreed purpose of supporting and strengthening leadership and empowerment of Head Teachers in six identified areas through School family improvement groups. To date, the remit of the Change Team has been to support systematic change in the Highland Education system. It has laid the foundation of the design principles for our proposed Education Structure within The Highland Council.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the update provided regarding Education Change Team activities.

### 3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource: This paper outlines how the current resources are being deployed in terms of the change team and other restructuring mechanisms.
- 3.2 Legal: There are no legal implications from the recommendations of this report.
- 3.3 Community ((Equality, Poverty and Rural): Planned improvements should support better outcomes for all young people and will take cognisance of the specific challenges of inequality, poverty and rurality.

- 3.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: There are no climate change implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 Risk: There are no risk implications arising from this report.
- 3.6 Gaelic: The delivery of better outcomes for young people will take cognisance of needs of Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learners.

#### 4. Introduction

- 4.1 For the successful implementation of the new structure, there needs to be a carefully planned transition to ensure all stakeholders are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the period of change. Through the consultation process, and further planned information sharing platforms, the new structure will be shared, timeframes for recruitment outlined and plans in place to ensure current good practice is not lost in this time, but rather embraced and continued into this new era in Highland Education. The Education Change Team established in May 2019, will mitigate the challenges of this transition period. With five members of the team each leading in their own area of expertise; consultation, information gathering, self-evaluation and improvement planning activities have taken place. The team has laid the foundations for successful restructuring to take place and will continue to support Head Teachers and their leadership teams throughout the process. The Education Change Team has been consulted, along with other stakeholders, about the proposed new leadership structure for the Education Directorate. The Education Change Team members will ensure a comprehensive handover of all relevant work undertaken to date to new post holders in the new structure. Further planning and participation in good practice visits to high performing comparator authorities will facilitate the outward and forward thinking approaches which will empower staff at all levels to embrace change positively, enhance innovation and inspire greater connectivity as recommended in national guidelines.
- 4.2 Further to this, Education Scotland has recently published its draft guidelines on 'Moving Towards Empowered Systems'. The document defines an empowered system as:
- “One that grows **stronger** and more **confident**, working in **partnership** to lead learning and teaching that achieves **excellence** and **equity** for **all learners**. Empowerment and collaboration for improvement happen at **all levels** in an empowered system.”
- 4.3 The 3 Work Streams identified in improving outcomes are:
- Empowerment of Schools
  - Local Authority Self-evaluation Framework
  - Evaluation Strategy
- 4.4 The Education Reform Joint Agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA, published in June 2018, informs that consultation “emphasized the need for a collaborative effort in order to achieve the overall aims, starting with teachers and leadership in schools and complemented by Local Authorities and new Regional Improvement Collaboratives”.

## **5. Work Stream Updates and Impact**

- 5.1 As part of the Highland Educational Improvement Framework and Continuous Lifelong Professional Learning Strategy, the aim as the Council moves forward is that schools collaborate together to support improvement. Pillar 1 of this framework is 'promoting positive relationships'.
- 5.2 As part of this relationship building and collaboration, the Change Team have supported the third round of family improvement days. Highland schools have embarked on a journey to build an empowered, connected, self-improving education system. Highland Schools are working together in family groupings to strengthen links between schools so that they can provide mutual support and challenge to each other.
- 5.3 The School Improvement Family Days provide valuable opportunities for family groups to come together, share effective practice and engage in high-quality professional dialogue. The Council is working towards enhancing a nurturing ethos in all schools where the focus is on a connected classroom and community and the family days are good examples of how these professional relationships are growing across Highland Schools.
- 5.4 The Nurture model, adopted by other high performing local authorities is also an example of how a positive shift in school culture, can support the ethos of a school and how relationships with the school and the wider community can be transformed through a focus on wellbeing and the principles of nurture. This work stream is currently being developed through partnership working with colleagues across services.
- 5.5 The ASN consultation process on the transformation project is underway with 8 of the 29 associated school groups (ASGs) visited so far. All visits will be completed by 11 December. The review involves meeting pupils, parents and staff and inviting their feedback on the ASN model, the ASN allocation system and paperwork associated with ASN including Child Plans. In addition to face to face meetings, there is also an online survey for pupils, parents and staff which will conclude on Friday 6 December 2019. Initial findings from the consultation have been shared at the Care, Learning and Housing Committee on 10 October. A report will be produced early in the New Year.
- 5.6 As part of the pupil advocacy programme, the Highland Children's Forum is developing an ASN Pupil Ambassador programme which aims to have "Inspire Pupil Advocacy groups" in all ASGs together with ASN Pupil Ambassadors. In addition Change Team members have been attending the Highland Youth Parliament and other young people's forums to ensure that the views of young people are taken account of in the ASN review. To support parent advocacy and in order to ensure that the consultation is as wide as possible, meetings have taken place with a range of organisations including Chip+, Dyslexia Scotland, and the Highland Parent Council Forum. This communication is ongoing.
- 5.7 The short life working group looking at the ASN allocation process has been established and work is ongoing in conjunction with the consultation feedback. There will also be a short life working group reviewing Child Plans and other ASN paperwork established in the new year.

- 5.8 The first round of training for school staff has taken place organised by the Educational Psychology Service and the next pan Highland training will be delivered in November and February. Feedback on this training and its impact will be gathered by the deliverers.
- 5.9 The empowerment agenda is an ongoing priority for the Change Team, continuing to support Head Teacher colleagues through the School Improvement Families' model:

Together with staffing officers and Head Teacher representatives the Change Team have drafted a new model for teacher appointments in partnership with LNCT. This model is to be taken forward to the Head Teachers' representatives group, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019, for approval.

Children Missing in Education policy is being updated with the Change Team. The next step is to ask Head Teacher colleagues in a variety of settings to pilot the proposed policy.

Together with colleagues the Change Team is working to reduce workload for Head Teacher colleagues by creating generic templates (policies, guidelines) that can be used and amended (pillar 3 mostly linked to Early Years Support).

- 5.10 Early Learning and Childcare:

The Change Team link with Senior Nursery Manager, Early Years Educational Psychologist and targeted Early Years staff groups to create a shared vision and shared understanding regarding high expectations and quality and how this is translated into everyday practice, keeping quality at the heart of everything schools do.

- 5.11 Links and connections are made within the Highlands and beyond (Education Scotland, Care Inspectorate and the Northern Alliance) for wider learning and sharing of good practice:

An audit was carried out with ELC Managers from across the authority to gauge the views on what was working well and what they felt they needed to further support progression

Meetings have been organised and led with Early Years Education Support Officers (EYESOs) for ongoing self-evaluation and targeted priorities to support ELC settings: Creating resources and support materials that all ELC Managers from across the authority can access.

Meetings/workshops with Childcare Managers and Excellence and Equity Leads are facilitated with key messages around quality shared. A Scottish Government Advisor organised to lead a parental partnership project with Excellence and Equity lead, throughout this Academic session, using Improvement Methodology to measure impact of remits in ELC settings.

School Improvement Family and Webinar workshops for Head Teachers and ELC Managers across the authority are taking place around quality and expectations from Scottish Government, Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate, linked to new self-evaluation toolkit and Inspection Frameworks. A further piece of work is learning about

the detail around the Care Inspectorate's new National Standards, to be implemented from August 2020 for all commissioned ELC providers.

5.12 Next step (as requested from Head Teacher colleagues) are:

New approaches to self-evaluation and Inspection Frameworks have to be fully understood and embedded by all Early Learning and Childcare Practitioners to be truly self-evaluative and reflective for ongoing improvements. The Change Team will continue to support Head Teacher colleagues in implementing this.

Create a toolkit that links self-evaluation frameworks from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate (HGIOELC, Building the Ambition, CI Inspection frameworks and standards).

Create a supportive model of support for ELC settings that are not delivering a service at the expected standards as required.

5.13 The improvement families have been supported in analysing attainment data. Working with data analysis colleagues, data is now arranged in to one central place on the newly launched SharePoint site. This gives staff easy access to their school data, other Highland school's data, National data and also Northern Alliance data. On the family days, HTs were supported to access and interpret data across their school/other schools. They were able to review areas of strength and areas to develop/learn from others. The Council will continue to support this process to ensure that attainment data is used to target improvements and interventions.

5.14 Curriculum is a key area of development across schools from Early level, Primary through to Secondary. The Scottish Government has recently issued a refreshed narrative of Curriculum for Excellence (<https://scotlandscurriculum.scot>). The Highland Council have linked with Education Scotland colleagues, both within the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement team but also the Head of Curriculum Innovation within Education Scotland. A professional learning day was arranged for Secondary school colleagues (Head teachers and those with responsibility for timetabling) as well as partners from UHI and Northern College. The focus for this session was discussion around the refreshed narrative looking at the Broad General Education in S1-S3 but also discussion around the pathways through the Senior Phase. A similar session looking at the refreshed narrative is planned for Primary school colleagues.

5.15 At the most recent family day, HTs continued this discussion around curriculum with a particular focus around curriculum rationale and key principles to enable a Highland agreed strategy. Primary HT colleagues focussed on the expectations around Early level especially Early Learning Childcare and the new National Standards for August 2020. Plans are also underway to centralise information on curriculum pathways and resources onto SharePoint to allow ease of access and also to highlight good practice.

5.16 The Council have linked Highlife Highland partners around supporting wider achievements and the role of Youth Development Workers and Active Schools Coordinators. This ongoing discussion includes wider accreditation and working with schools to target pupils at risk of not engaging.

- 5.17 The Council will continue to link with colleagues over the educational support for Care Experienced pupils. Following discussion with the Transition Coordinator (from the Placement Services Change team), joint visits are arranged to Highland residential and respite homes. This will enable us to gather the views of young people to feed into the intended protocols for Care experienced young people.
- 5.18 Schools now have the 'schools' hub' on SharePoint, a central point for policies, portals and communication. We plan, to migrate out of date resources from GLOW to more accessible platforms for teaching and learning. We are also supporting work to create a management calendar for senior leaders, which identifies clearly a schedule of returns, surveys and census deadlines. Highland Headlines on SharePoint has been created and all non-essential surveys, emails and information will be uploaded here for head teacher to access a time more appropriate than daily emails which are non-essential. Head teachers, across Highland now have new laptops, saving valuable working time. Updated technologies support a connected Highlands and enable our schools to communicate effectively and develop innovative and creative approaches to teaching and learning.
- 5.19 The digital learning & teaching strategy is in progress and is being drafted across a collegiate team, including ICT Services. The next work stream is focusing on school improvement planning and how we could adapt our planning to focus more on aims and outcomes, whilst planning for the most impact on attainment and achievement.

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 24 November 2019

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